

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
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P R 161603Z DEC 75

FM AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 7866

INFO USMISSION NATO

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

S E C R E T MOSCOW 17961

EXDIS

E.O.11652: XGDS-1

TAGS: PFOR, PARM, NATO, UR, US

SUBJECT: SOVIET POSITION ON CBMS

1. SUMMARY. THE DEPUTY DIRECTOR OF MFA' INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS DIVISION (ROLAND TIMERBAYEV -- PROTECT VERY STRICTLY) HAS CONFIRMED OUR IMPRESSION THAT THE QUESTION OF ACTIVE PARTICIPATION IN CBM'S HAS NOT YET BEEN FINALLY SETTLED IN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT. TIMERBAYEV, EVIDENTLY REPRESENTING HIS DIVISION'S VIEWS ON THE ISSUE (AND PERHAPS THOSE OF MFA IN GENERAL) TOOK THE HIGHLY UNUSUAL STEP IN HIS CONVERSATION WITH US TO SUGGEST THAT MORE "PRODDING" FROM THE WEST (AFTER THE SOVIET PARTY CONGRESS) WOULD ASSIST IN ENSURING A POSITIVE SOVIET FINAL DECISION. END SUMMARY.

2. EMBOFF AT SOCIAL OCCASION EVENING OF DECEMBER 15 DISCUSSED GENERAL DISARMAMENT TOPICS WITH TIMERBAYEV IN A GROUP WHICH INCLUDED THE BRITISH CHARGE AND A FRENCH EMBOFF. WHEN TIMERBAYEV MENTIONED THAT HIS DIVISION IN MFA HAD HANDLED CBM CONSIDERATION IN THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT DURING CSCE NEGOTIATIONS, EMBOFF VOLUNTEERED THAT SOME PEOPLE IN THE U.S. FOREIGN AFFAIRS BUREAUCRACY HELD THE OPINION THAT THE SOVIET POSITION ON THAT ISSUE STILL HAD NOT YET BEEN FULLY DECIDED. TIMERBAYEV, PAUSING BRIEFLY, ANSWERED THAT THOSE PEOPLE

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WERE RIGHT. EMBOFF THEN ASKED WHEN WE COULD EXPECT AT

DECISION TO BE REACHED. TIMERBAYEV PAUSED FOR A FULL THIRTY SECONDS BEFORE ANSWERING THAT ""IT IS DIFFICULT TO SAY--BUT YOU HAVE DEALT WITH US LONG ENOUGH TO KNOW THAT WE NEED TO BE PRODDED; ADDITIONAL PRODDING WOULD HELP." THE BRITISH CHARGE THEN ASKED WHOM WE SHOULD "PROD", AND WHEN. TIMERBAYEV DID NOT REPLY TO THE FIRST QUESTION, BUT TO THE SECOND SAID THAT THE PRODDING SHOULD NOT TAKE PLACE BEFORE "THE END OF FEBRUARY (I.E., THE PARTY CONGRESS)...PERHAPS IN MARCH."

3. COMMENT: TIMERBAYEV IS, AS FAR AS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ESTABLISH, A VERY RESPONSIBLE AND INFLUENTIAL OFFICIAL IN THE SOVIET ARMS CONTROL BUREAUCRACY. HE IS ISRAELYAN'S CHIEF DEPUTY, AND AS WELL AS BEING THE MAN PROBABLY MOST DIRECTLY IN CHARGE OF OPERATIONAL AFFAIRS IN ARMS CONTROL QUESTIONS, HE ALMOST CERTAINLY PLAYS SOME ROLE AT THE POLICY LEVEL AS WELL. THAT HE WOULD TAKE THE EXTREMELY UNUSUAL STEP--SEEMINGLY AFTER CAREFUL CONSIDERATION--OF SUGGESTING TO A BRITISH, A FRENCH, AND AN AMERICAN DIPLOMAT THAT THE WEST SHOULD "PROD" MOSCOW ON CBM'S CAN ONLY INDICATE THAT HIS DIVISION (AND PERHAPS MFA AS A WHOLE) SUPPORTS MORE ACTIVE SOVIET CBM PARTICIPATION, BUT IS ENCOUNTERING OPPOSITION ELSEWHERE IN THE SOVIET BUREAUCRACY.

4. ASIDE FROM THE SINGULARITY OF HIS OPENLY SUGGESTING WESTERN PRESSURE, IT IS ALSO INTERESTING THAT HE APPARENTLY BELIEVES THAT SUCH PRESSURE WOULD BE EFFECTIVE. EVIDENTLY, IN TIMERBAYEV'S OPINION, A POSITIVE DECISION ON CBM'S IS NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION. (WE WOULD ADD THAT THE PREVIOUS PRESS CAMPAIGN AGAINST NATO MANEUVERS HAS SUBSIDED--THOUGH OF COURSE THE END OF NATO'S FALL MANEUVERS HAS REMOVED MUCH OF THE ORIGINAL CAUSE FOR SUCH A CAMPAIGN--AND BUILDING CONFIDENCE HAS BEGUN TO RECEIVE HONORABLE MENTION AGAIN)

5. WE CAN SEE NO WAY IN WHICH TIMERBAYEV'S REMARKS COULD BE SELF-SERVING, AND THEREFORE CONCLUDE THAT HE WAS SPEAKING SERIOUSLY. WE RECOMMEND THAT THE DEPARTMENT BEGIN CONSIDERATION OF HOW WE SHOULD REACT TO
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THEM. THE DEPARTMENT MAY WISH EVEN BEFORE THE PARTY CONGRESS TO TAKE STEPS AT AN APPROPRIATELY HIGH LEVEL TO REMIND THE SOVIETS AGAIN OF OUR CONTINUING INTEREST IN CBM'S, WHILE PERHAPS PURSUING IN NATO THE FEASIBILITY OF RENEWED "PRODDING" AFTER THE CONGRESS, AS TIMERBAYEV SUGGESTED. WE MAY ALSO WISH TO REMIND SOVIETS OF MUTUALLY ADVANTAGEOUS CHARACTER OF VISIBLE IMPLEMENTATION OF CBM PROVISIONS IN COURSE OF BILATERAL

DISCUSSIONS OF CSCE IMPLEMENTATION FOLLOWING UP OUR
OCTOBER 14/NOVEMBER 12 EXCHANGE ON THIS TOPIC.

STOESSEL

SECRET

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: CBMS, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION, MEETING OBSERVERS, COLLECTIVE SECURITY AGREEMENTS
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 DEC 1975
Decaption Date: 28 MAY 2004
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: greeneet
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1975MOSCOW17961
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D750437-0399
From: MOSCOW
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1975/newtext/t19751235/aaaabfgy.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: greeneet
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 08 APR 2003
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <08 APR 2003 by ShawDG>; APPROVED <27 OCT 2003 by greeneet>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
06 JUL 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: SOVIET POSITION ON CBMS
TAGS: PFOR, PARM, UR, US, NATO
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006